

SIDES Book Club Notes June 1/17

Books: How We Learn by Benedict Carey
Creative Schools by Ken Robinson

For How We Learn:

- People seemed to like both books. Surprised by some comments and other were re-affirmed.
- Liked the sense of humour in How We Learn. Also good that it was evidence based.
- Surprised by how testing helps kids learn. If students do the pre-test then the actual test, it's a good strategy.
- Comments on sleep were interesting.
- Sometimes doing the all-nighters was good, then sleep in late. Depends on sleep patterns and what is being tested.
- Interesting on learning in your sleep. Deep sleep reinforces vocab. Lighter focuses on creativity and motor skills.
- People seemed to want to have a copy of the graph about this.
- Explains re fitbits – tracking sleep patterns.
- It's also important to have a gap of time to consolidate thinking. ie course development/part time versus full time doing this.
- Gives time to process ideas while doing other things.
- Can think about this in terms of structuring courses/reflection at the end of each piece – will this help with an Inquiry project?
- Illusion – but I thought I knew it all. Just going over notes is not creating something new. Need to recite it, test yourself.
- Brain tricks itself into thinking you know something.
- Shorter focus/more times versus cramming and need to retain long term.
- People liked how he didn't spend 40% of the time name dropping in the book.
- Interesting research tied in.
- liked the important questions summary as well.

For Creative Schools:

- people who read this also liked it.
- Focused on grad rates a lot, which makes sense.
- Need to have schools that community, learners, parents, staff see as working for that place.
- Liked how there was a focus on not being specialized, ie Academies
- need a balanced curriculum.
- Equal status and resources to Arts, Humanities, Language Arts, Math, PE and Science.
- Really liked the idea of Arts taken seriously.
- Curriculum that is connected, shared and planned.
- Liked the idea of teachers being valued/enticed by good, stable jobs and high expectations.
- Connections with home and school.
- To transform a school you need leadership from the principal, faculty willing to engage in change and quality professional development.

- Scary seeing the US and UK – right wing movement to break up and commercialize education.
- Capitalism versus education.
- Nothing better than well supported public schools.

SIDES:

- how can we make this work?
- Staff usually on the same page.
- More inter-departmental collaboration than in some other places.
- Need to be okay with change.
- Challenges include diverse backgrounds of students.
- Look for gaps in student's education, and try to fill those in.
- our courses, some take them one at a time; flies in the face of some of the studies.
Depends on the student?
- Addresses idea of student being in the right mood to come in and do the test/work they need.
- Sleep – need this to do well. Mental and physical health is important.
- And courses generally address different ways of learning, ie videos, written, etc.